

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the subject application.

Listing of Claims:

What is claimed is:

1. (Cancelled)

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Cancelled)

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13. (Cancelled)

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Cancelled)

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Cancelled)

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Cancelled)

23. (Cancelled)

24. (Cancelled)

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Currently Amended) A method of manufacturing an animal chew comprising: (a) providing a base material and a preheated binder and forming a mixture, wherein said mixture has a

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selected moisture level "x"; (b) introducing and further mixing said mixture in a screw conveyor wherein the temperature of the mixture in the screw conveyor is maintained at a temperature of at or below about 200° F and a shear rate at or below 10^4 (sec^{-1}) and said moisture level is reduced to a ~~final~~ moisture level "y" wherein y the moisture level < x; (c) introducing the product of step (b) on to rollers which form a sheet and wherein said rollers provide cooling; (d) introducing the product of step (c) into a cooled chamber at a selected temperature; (e) cutting said product of step (d) into a desired shape.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26 wherein the base material is an edible material.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27 wherein the edible material is selected from the group consisting of starch, rice meal, soybean, casein, denatured and partially hydrolyzed casein, protein, rawhide, dairy, meat by-products, plant, vegetable matter or animal matter, and mixtures thereof.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26 wherein said cooled chamber comprises a cooling tunnel.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26 wherein the moisture level "x" is at or below 50% (wt).

31. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 26, wherein ~~["y"]~~the moisture level is at or below 15% (wt).

32. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 26, wherein ~~["y"]~~the moisture level is between 10-12% (wt).

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33. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26 wherein said preheated binder upon cooling serves to bind said mixture together.

34. (Cancelled)

35. (Cancelled)

36. (New) The method of claim 26 further comprising laminating on or consolidating with a second layer, having different components than said mixture.

37. (New) The method of claim 36 further comprising applying said second layer prior to introducing the product of step (b) on to rollers.